

WJTL RADIO TOWER AT FOX



From 1931 until 1937, a radio tower sat atop the Egyptian Ballroom of the Yaarab Shrine Mosque, a/k/a the Atlanta Fox Theatre.

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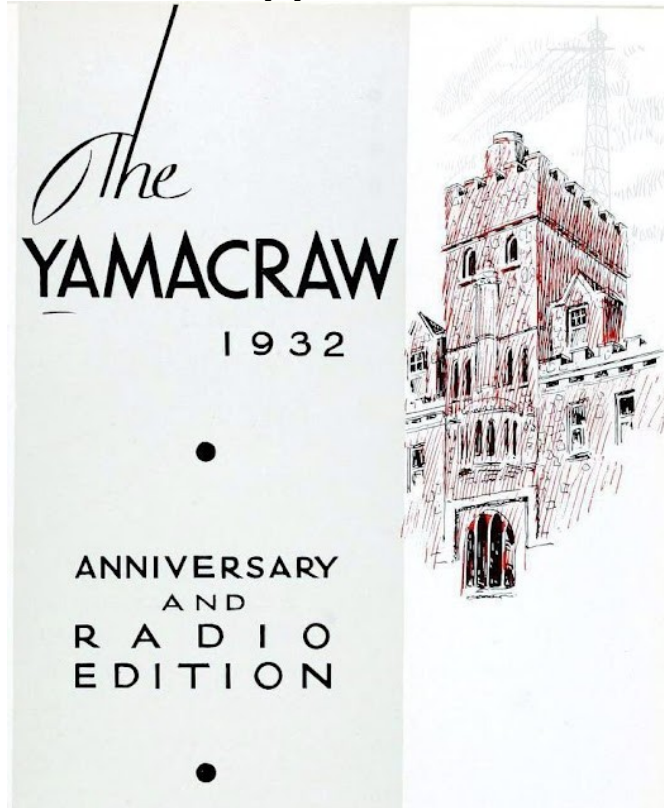
New Tower Antenna Installed by WJTL At Shrine Mosque

The latest development in radio transmitting, according to officials of WJTL, Oglethorpe University station, has been installed in the new transmitting studios atop the Shrine Mosque in the shape of a tower, the summit of which is 147 feet above the roof of Yaarab Temple. This tower, the third of its kind to be installed in the United States, has been installed by technicians of WJTL to insure good reception for Atlanta listeners. The use of the steel and aluminum tower as the antenna of the station with no other wires or appendages marks a forward step in radio transmission in that the tower co-ordinates the sky and ground waves sent out by the broadcasting apparatus, weaves the sound waves into a harmonious whole, and practically increases the power of the station.

The new studios will be used for the first time Thursday morning, Dr. Thornwell Jacobs announced Wednesday. While the new studios will be used to a great extent, the main studios on the campus of the university will continue to supply the bulk of the station's programs.

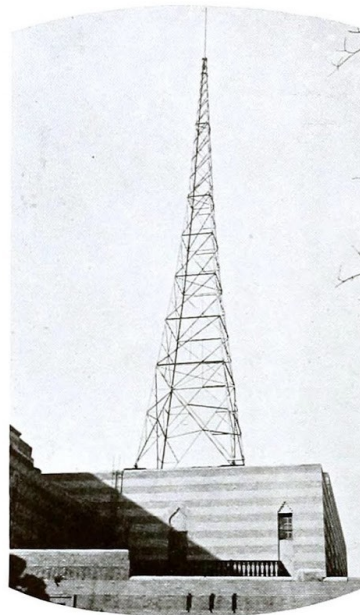
Lynne J. Brannen and Frank Parkins, WJTL engineers, are in charge of the removal of the transmitting facilities.

The transmitter for WJTL [John Thomas Lupton], the AM radio station belonging to Oglethorpe University, was located in a supply room off of the Egyptian Ballroom balcony stairwell, and broadcasts originated at the university campus, ten miles north. (The Yaarab Shrine Mosque leased the space to the school, and the Fox Theatre was not at all involved.) Oglethorpe lost the station in 1935, and two years later the tower was relocated to the Henry Grady Hotel for the aptly renamed WATL. From the university yearbook:



Radio History

By VERNON ANDERSON



June 6, 1931 marked the beginning of a new era in the history of education. It was the birthday of Radio Station WJTL, the Radio Division of Oglethorpe University.

Early in the spring of 1931 Oglethorpe received the permission of the Federal Radio Commission to erect and operate a radio station. The generosity of Mr. and Mrs. John Thomas Lupton, donors of Lupton Hall, made possible the installation of one of the most completely equipped regional channel stations in America, whose call letters were formed from the initials of our gracious friends.

At first the entire station was located in Lupton Hall, on the campus of the University. The entire Biology Department was moved from Lupton Hall to Lowry Hall to make room for the new Radio Division. Two large studios were constructed and elaborately equipped and a small room was turned into a transmitting and control room.

Thus on June 6, with the beginning of regular lectures, Oglethorpe University became the possessor of the first standard Radio College in the history of the world. There have been many educational programs presented over many broadcasting stations, but never before, so far as we have been able to learn, in the history of this

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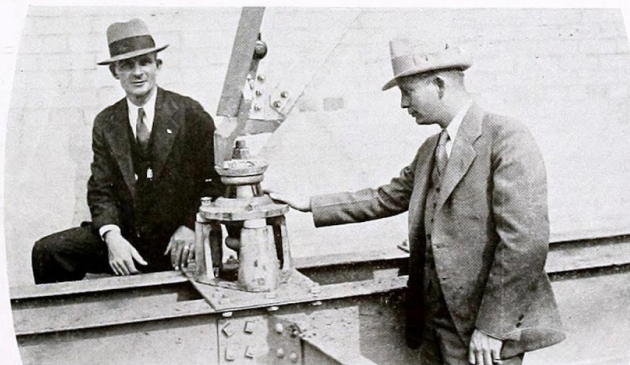
or any other country, has a complete college course been broadcast by a complete faculty in the same manner as when offered on the campus.

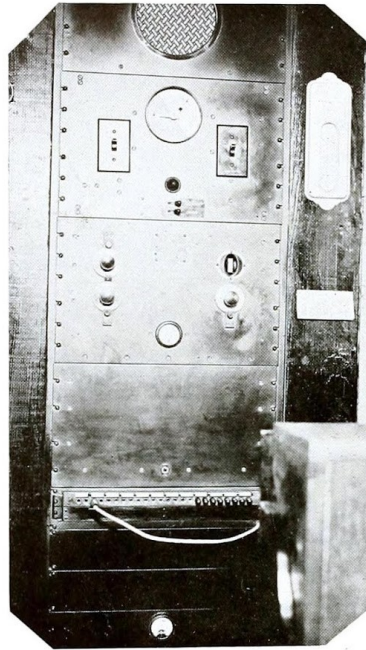
The equipment of WJTL is of the latest type available. The transmitter is an RCA 100-W, employing direct crystal control and 100 percent modulation. RCA microphones and amplifiers are used in the studios. In addition, a new RCA frequency monitor has recently been purchased to enable the station to comply with the new government regulations concerning frequency deviation and frequency checking.

After a few months of operation in Lupton Hall, officials of the University decided that greater Atlanta could be better served by moving the transmitter nearer the center of the city. Accordingly, therefore, the Yaarab Shrine Mosque, one of the most beautiful buildings in the South, was picked as the new site for the transmitter. At the same time it was decided to erect a new type of antenna which would also add to the efficiency of the station. This new an-

tenna, which is a seven ton, 135 foot, base-insulated steel tower, is the first quarter-wave vertical radiator in the world. It represents an achievement resulting from years of study and research directed toward the production of a system giving maximum radiation of the power supplied to it. Engineers have pronounced it the ultimate in antenna construction. The tower was erected atop the Mosque and directly under it a transmitting room and a small studio were built. The large studios at Oglethorpe were retained, having been connected with the new transmitter location by special telephone lines. About the middle of November the work was completed and one Sunday afternoon WJTL broadcast her first program from the Yaarab Shrine Mosque. Reports soon showed that the expectations of the officials were justified.

A glance at a day's schedule will give some idea of the scope of the work carried on by the Radio Division. Each morning the station is opened with a devotional program from 6:45 to 7:00. This is followed by an hour of variety musical programs. At eight o'clock Dr. H. J. Gaertner lectures on beginners' German. A lecture is of

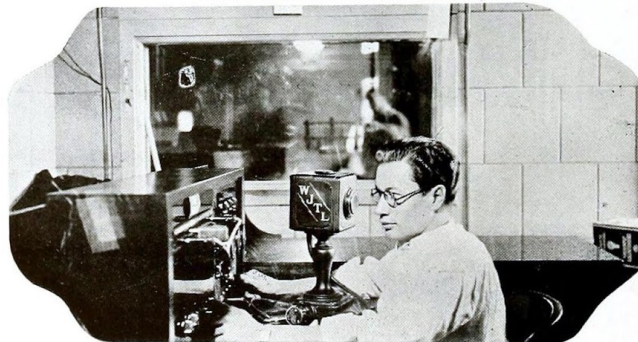




fifty minutes duration and is followed by a ten minute recess, during which music is offered. At nine o'clock Dr. James E. Routh lectures on English, Idioms and Good Usage. A lecture on an Introduction to Economics is presented by Dr. Wallace McCook Cunningham at ten o'clock, and at eleven Dr. James E. Routh lectures on Types of literature. Prof. Francisco Perez offers a course in Beginners' Spanish at twelve o'clock. Luncheon hour lasts from twelve-fifty until two o'clock. During this time a varied musical program is presented over the station. At two o'clock Dr. Witherspoon Dodge resumes the educational program with a lecture on Contemporary Civilization. At three o'clock Dr. Wallace McCook Cunningham lectures on Business Problems. At four Dr. Witherspoon Dodge returns to the air to lecture on an Introduction to Philosophy. At five o'clock Dr. Mark Burrows concludes the day's educational activity with a lecture on the Biography of Musicians, magnificently illustrated with recordings of their respective works. From five-fifty until twelve, midnight, various commercial and sustaining programs are presented.

Announcement has just been made that Oglethorpe University will institute a complete four year course in radio broadcasting. This course will begin with the opening of the fall term in September of this year. Every phase of radio work, including the commercial, managerial and technical aspects, will be taught, together with courses in announcing, studio direction and program formulation. Completion of the required

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four year course entitles a student to a degree of Bachelor of arts in the School of Radio Broadcasting. Oglethorpe thus becomes the first standard university in the world to offer a full four-year course in radio learning to an accredited college degree. The regular faculty of the new radio college will be headed by Dr. James E. Routh as dean, and others of the Oglethorpe faculty, as follows: Dr. John A. Aldrich, physics; Dean J. F. Sellers, chemistry; Dean W. McCook Cunningham, business administration; Dr. Mark Burrows, music; Dr. Thornwell Jacobs, history of earth and its inhabitants; Professor Porohoushikoff, Professor Perez and Professor Pattelli, modern languages; Dr. Gaertner, psychology; Dr. D. Witherspoon Dodge, radio ethics.

Instructors in professional courses will be headed by David Brinkmoeller, director of Station WJTL of the university, who will lecture on studio management and studio direction, and Vernon Anderson and Frank Parkins, of the studio staff, on radio theory.

The personnel of radio station WJTL has been drawn from every branch of the radio field, and from the student body of the university. The staff is as follows:

David Brinkmoeller, formerly manager of WGST, is now director of WJTL.

Frank Parkins, formerly chief engineer of WRBI is the chief engineer in charge of WJTL's technical department.

The program management is under Jeff MacMillan.

Joe Paget, Barclay Jackson, Spencer Worthy and Al Herrick are announcers and control operators.

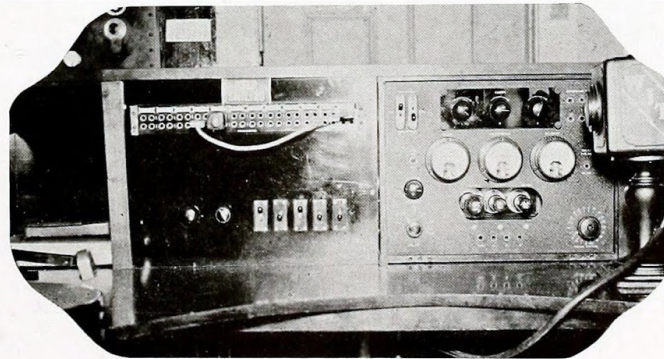
George Moore and Maurice Coleman are commercial representatives.

Al Riley, Frank Whitmore and Vernon Anderson are engineers.

Because the activities of the Radio Division are not confined solely to the educational field, its history is not complete without some mention of its entertainment facilities. It has put on the air some of the foremost musical talent of the South.



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From RCA Broadcast News, January 1932:



STATION WJTL MOVES

The "UNIVERSITY OF THE AIR" is moving their transmitter from the location at Oglethorpe University eight miles north of Atlanta to the Fox Theatre building, right in the heart of Atlanta. The

studios, however, will remain in Lupton Hall, on the University Campus.

Dr. Thornwell Jacobs, President of Oglethorpe University, Ga., is shown above at the microphone of

WJTL. In addition to the RCA Transmitter and Studio equipment, the University has installed a complete RCA Victor Centralized Radio system connecting class rooms, dormitories, dining hall and the stadium.

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January, 2020.